

**06 Budgeting Child, Spousal and Cash Medical Support**

**REVISION 44**  
(08/01/16 - 09/30/16)

Child, Spousal and Cash Medical support payments are considered income of the participant to whom support is court ordered to be paid. Key support payments next to the participant court ordered to receive the support payment. This is usually the custodial parent or person.

**EXCEPTION**

Do NOT key support income when the person court ordered to pay the support income and the person court ordered to receive the support income are in the same household.

Only court ordered child support payments are budgeted as child support. When the absent parent gives money to the participant without being ordered by the court, the income is budgeted as a gift.

Discuss with the participant the court ordered amount of support and the amount they normally receive. All recurring arrearages received must be budgeted.

**WARNING**

When there are no arrears, fees, or judgments owed and the amount of support income paid is over the court ordered amount, budget the amount that is over as a gift unless the amount over is due to averaging.

The Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) is Arizona's Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement agency. Support income issued through DCSS is based on court ordered support and considered verified.

Always review **CHSP** for support payments issued through DCSS. This support information is automatically sent by DCSS to CHSP in AZTECS after the first month that NA benefits are issued when the absent parent was connected at one time to the AZTECS case.

The following support income is issued through DCSS and displays on CHSP as follows:

- Current Child Support (CS RE or BC RE)
- Current Alimony or Spousal Maintenance Support (SP RE)
- Current Cash Medical Support (CM RE)
- Support Arrearages (CS AR, CS LS, BC AR, BC LS, SP AR, SP LS, CM AR or CM LS)

NOTE AR displaying on CHSP indicates a support arrearage payment that is RECURRING. LS indicates a [Lump Sum](#) payment. Lump sum payments are NOT countable as income. Count such payments as a resource.

A discrepancy may occur between CHSP and the participant's statement or the participant's verification. When this occurs, discuss with the participant the amount that is normal to be received. When the discrepancy cannot be explained or is questionable, elevate the case situation to the [Policy Support Team](#) (PST) via e-mail for resolution.

NOTE DCSS has the authority to attach additional support arrearages. When the discrepancy is due to additional recurring child support arrearages added to the support order by DCSS, it is not necessary to elevate to the PST. Budget the arrearages that are recurring.

**WARNING**

CHSP screens can be printed for the [case file\(g\)](#) ONLY. Per FAA's Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) with DCSS, DO NOT PRINT CHSP screens to give to a participant. (See [Release of Confidential Information](#))

NOTE For a listing of state web sites that provide child support income information on-line, see [Child Support On-line Information](#).

To budget support income, complete the following:

- When available, review three or more consecutive months of support income pay history. Pay history includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Court records
  - Pay records or histories from the Clerk of the Court in Arizona or another state
  - DCSS documents showing the amount of support paid
  - Copies of checks or money orders made out to the custodial parent indicating that the payment is for support
  - Receipts and pay histories from any state's child support centralized payment processing center
- When the prior 30 days is an accurate reflection of what is expected to be received, budget that amount.
- When support income fluctuates for any reason review and average three or more consecutive months of support income.
- Discuss with the participant the amount of court ordered support that is normally received. Clarify with the participant the amount expected to be received and when possible, have the participant write a statement.
- When the participant is not available and a normal amount cannot be determined, attempt a collateral contact and when necessary, send an information request.
- When the court ordered amount or the amount received is different due to an additional recurring arrearage, budget the additional recurring support income as arrearages.
- Document the case file with how the amount of support income budgeted was determined.

**NOTE** Budget support income over the court ordered amount ONLY when the amount over is due to averaging. Any monies actually received for current support that are over the court ordered amount (not due to averaging) are countable as a gift.

**WARNING**

When support income is received more often than monthly, determine an average monthly amount. Add the support payments received within each month together and divide by the number of months used in the income period. Include any zero months in the

averaging determination when the zero months are expected to continue (See Example [Budgeting Support 5](#)).

Participants that receive support income on a regular basis may, at times, receive an extra support payment for reasons including any of the following:

- A change in issue dates.
- Weekends or holidays cause an interruption in issuing schedules.
- Payment was not received in the month for which it was intended. (See [Example Budgeting Support 2](#))

**WARNING**

When the support income received in the application month is for a full month, the amount is known. For initial applications, budget the known amount that is court ordered and is expected to be received for the application month. For ongoing months, use the last 30 days or more when necessary, to budget a true reflection of support income normally received on a monthly basis.

The participant or payment history may indicate that support income is sporadic and may include zero income months. When this occurs, and is expected to continue, add the support income amounts in the months income was received along with the zero income months to calculate the average amount. (See [Example Budgeting Support 4](#)).

**WARNING**

RECURRING support arrearage payments are countable as unearned income and must be budgeted. When the arrearage payment is recurring and can be anticipated, budget the support income using the appropriate Unearned Income Code in the INC TYP field on UNIC. (See [Example Budgeting Support 6](#))

Do not budget a lump sum arrearage payment. A lump sum payment is considered a one-time lump sum and is not expected to continue.

Follow the same budgeting procedures when the participant does not surrender support payments assigned to DCSS.

Key the CS NS Unearned Income Code in the INC TYP field on UNIC.

Budget support income passed through by DCSS, for children not included in the CA benefit, such as a family benefit cap (BC) child or a child receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This income displays as BC RE, BC AR and BC LS on CHSP. Budget the support income for the child not included in the CA benefit. Key the appropriate Unearned Income Code in the INC TYP field on UNIC.

**CA WARNING**

When support income, received from any source, is assigned to and retained by DCSS, do NOT budget the support income during the following times:

- Beginning the month after the month CA is approved.
- While CA remains in OPEN status.

When support income is received directly from a private collection agency, do not deduct fees retained by the collection agency. (See [Direct Pay Support Income](#).)